

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Anthony. I am a resident of New Haven, Connecticut. I am a member of CT Students for a Dream and the Semilla Collective and an organizer for immigrant rights. I support S.B. 248: An Act Increasing The Age From Eight To Eighteen Years For An Income-Eligible Person To Obtain Medical Assistance Regardless Of Immigration Status.

S.B. 248 will expand access to HUSKY healthcare up to age eighteen regardless of immigration status which is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to affordable quality healthcare. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age eighteen, we need to open access to HUSKY healthcare to immigrants of all ages, including parents and adults. It's critical that we expand health care coverage and make dependable health care more affordable in the face of a deadly ongoing pandemic, especially with so many workers struggling to recover from the financial impact of the pandemic.

This bill is important to me because access to healthcare is a basic human right. I am undocumented and I've experienced first hand lack of access to affordable healthcare due to my immigrant status. This led me to live anxiously about getting hurt or becoming sick. One visit to the hospital left me in \$8,000 of debt. The only way I am able to have insurance now is because I obtained DACA and was able to join my husband's work provided health plan. This is not the case for many of the undocumented residents in CT that don't have access to affordable healthcare.

Throughout my time organizing to support mutual aid efforts during the pandemic in New Haven, I've met and spoken to many undocumented families and individuals about the challenges they are facing. Many are unemployed due to the pandemic and cannot afford their rent, bills or have access to affordable healthcare due to their legal status, that is not fair especially when undocumented immigrants contribute roughly 145 million dollars in state and local taxes every year. This bill gives the 64,000 uninsured undocumented residents in CT the ability to seek preventive care and avoid developing chronic illness. We cannot leave anyone behind in the fight for high quality, affordable and equitable health care. SB 248 will ensure everyone has access to affordable care.

I support S.B. 284 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you,

Anthony Barroso